



NTSB Academy at The George Washington University

***Independence, integrity and innovation
in transportation accident investigation.***

The NTSB Academy is a major initiative of the Safety Board to improve the training and skills of its own employees, and make its safety expertise and know-how more widely available to the transportation community. An initial step took place in November 2000, when the NTSB selected The George Washington University as the new home of the NTSB Academy.



**Artist's rendering of
the new NTSB Academy
on the Virginia campus of
George Washington
University.**

Academy Mission

The mission of the NTSB Academy is to provide comprehensive education and training to the men and women who improve safety by conducting independent transportation accident investigations; to foster an environment that encourages transportation safety initiatives and technical research; and to promote uniform programs that ensure compassion, understanding and assistance for those affected by transportation tragedies.

Construction Moves Ahead in Northern Virginia

The NTSB and the university signed a 20-year lease in July 2001. In November, building construction began on the university's campus in Ashburn, Virginia, adjacent to the U.S. Department of Transportation National Crash Analysis Center and near Washington Dulles International Airport. It is set to open in late summer 2003.

The state-of-the-art, 72,000-square-foot, two-level facility will contain five classrooms, a large laboratory to house the three-dimensional, 93-foot reconstruction of the forward portion of the TWA flight 800 aircraft's fuselage, ample laboratory space, an outside simulations court, meeting rooms, student and teacher work areas, and offices.

During 2001, the NTSB selected a core staff of five to plan, develop and execute the Academy's objectives: an academy director, an assistant director of instruction, an operations manager, a communications manager, and an administrative officer.



The classroom building and laboratory take shape in Northern Virginia.

The laboratory will house the world's largest civil aviation reconstruction.

Curriculum Development Committee

In September 2001, an Academy Curriculum Development Committee was formed. It is chaired by the Safety Board's managing director, includes all office directors, and meets regularly. The committee determines training needs, identifies and develops curricula in all modes, develops courses and materials, identifies effective instructors, suggests resources, and reviews final course proposals.

In addition to refining the Safety Board's current accident investigation course and making it more accessible, the committee envisions courses that cover innovative investigative tools in areas such as human factors, survival factors, vehicle performance, interviewing techniques, accident scene documentation, and investigation management.

Academy Courses

Although the facility is under construction, several courses were offered in 2001 and 2002. They included a basic accident investigation course for NTSB employees and investigators from foreign countries, airline industry training sessions to familiarize the industry with duties and responsibilities during NTSB investigations, a family affairs course designed for law enforcement officers who respond to aviation disasters, and comprehensive family assistance courses for those who assist friends and families of major transportation accident victims.

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